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MINNEAPOLIS (WCCO) – With all the cases of measles going around, vaccinations are once again becoming a hot topic.

There have been 23 confirmed cases of measles in Minnesota so far this year. The patients range in age from 4 months to 51 years old. Of those cases, nine of the people who could have had the shot have not been vaccinated.

In spite of the fact that most babies cry when they get a vaccination shot, doctors say it is one of the best things parents can do for their children. Children's Hospital in St. Paul calls this forum an attempt to re-energize health workers during National Immunization Week.

"Some parents have chosen not to vaccinate their child against measles by holding the MMR vaccine. That's a very dangerous thing to do," said Patsy Stinchfield with Children's Hospitals and Clinics.

Many parents in the Twin Cities refusing vaccinations are in the Somali community. Those who attended the immunization forum heard from Hodan Hussan, a Somali mother from Minneapolis who has an autistic child.

"It will help me and parents like me to get information about immunizations and the benefits of it, and that it doesn't cause autism, definitely, that's the big thing why I'm here today," Hussan said.

Separating childhood vaccines from autism fears is a major goal for healthcare workers. Congresswoman Betty McCollum said there should be no financial reason for parents to skip vaccinations.

"With the new health care law that congress just passed, we removed many barriers for parents having to pay co-pays to make sure that well, baby check-ups and immunizations move forward," McCollum said.

Officials at Children's Hospital also want parents to know that measles is a very serious disease. It was responsible for the deaths of three Minnesota Children in 1990.